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THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON
UNDER SECRETARY

March 6, 1959

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WHD 901068 8/22/61
HR-m/SG

Dear Secretary Herter:

In accordance with your request of 3 March, we have subjected the draft paper entitled, "Elements of a Western Position at a Conference with the Soviets," to a preliminary review.

We recognize that while the basic problems primarily are political in character, they do have important military overtones. In this connection there are three aspects of the paper which are of significant concern to the Department of Defense.

1. The Area and Provisions Governing the "Special Security Area."

The draft paper adopts as the area for special security arrangements the same zone proposed in the Rapacki Plan, i.e., all of Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia, with Hungary mentioned as a possible additional country. The suggested proposals in the three stages outlined in the position paper are apparently directed toward countering Soviet Bloc proposals concerning the limitations on nuclear warheads and delivery systems in this zone. The net effect of the recommended proposals is the creation of the following basic risks to Western security without compensating gains:

a. Reduction if not elimination of the effectiveness of the planned German contribution to the common defense of Western Europe, as well as the defense of West German territory prior to reunification;

b. Increased hazard of surprise Soviet attack through acceptance of an inadequate inspection system which is technically incapable of identifying nuclear warheads and which would subject forward deployed Western forces to a more effective inspection than those of the Soviet Bloc;

c. A retreat from NATO forward strategy by a reduction from the planned support by the nuclear weapons upon which it depends;

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d. Situations which would lead inevitably to further allied concessions under duress of Soviet atomic blackmail; and

e. Demands for expansion of the proposed zone in Europe and the establishment of similar zones in other limited world areas.

2. Provisions Relating to Surprise Attack and Disarmament.

The provisions relating to surprise attack are contrary to our current national disarmament policy. Basic decisions regarding the establishment and phasing of surprise attack measures in the proposed European area should be taken within the context of our overall disarmament policies, and the status of European security negotiations with the USSR. The disarmament proposals contained in the draft serve to isolate European disarmament measures, including inspection systems, from general disarmament measures. It is the position of the Department of Defense that all disarmament proposals no matter how limited must be in accord with our general disarmament policy in order to avoid inconsistencies resulting from piecemeal or regional application. This position applies to any discussion of German disarmament. For these reasons it is recommended that if disarmament is to be discussed that the discussion include the full range of our disarmament proposals consistent with our disarmament policy at the time.

3. Involvement of the United Nations in Berlin.

We feel that it is of paramount importance to preserve Western legal rights in Berlin ~~and Germany~~ and to perform the obligations of existing agreements, and we would oppose any UN involvement which would jeopardize these rights.

In connection with the above it has been substantially the position of the Department of Defense that at the minimum:

a. The United States can accept, as the price of a reunified Germany, in or out of NATO, the withdrawal of all foreign forces from a United Germany provided:

1. Allied forces in Germany can be relocated in areas contiguous to Germany.

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2. USSR forces from Germany will be positioned behind Soviet borders.
3. A compensatory build-up is permitted a United Germany.
4. Adequate safeguards are agreed to in order to verify the withdrawals and prevent evasion.
 - b. With a divided Germany, withdrawals or disengagements of military forces or the establishment of atom-free zones in Central Europe pose unacceptable military risks.
 - c. Allied forces should remain in West Berlin and would not include West German forces until reunification is complete.

In view of the foregoing, we recognize that the eventual U.S. proposals to the Soviet Union may differ from those made in the past, and we consider therefore that the draft position paper should immediately be subjected to more searching analysis by Defense agencies here and in Europe. Since this will require several days' time, it is suggested that the U. S. members of the Working Group be instructed to maintain an attitude which will permit time for the establishment of an agreed U.S. position paper. Meanwhile, it would be preferable if the negotiations in Paris are conducted in such a manner as to permit the U.S. to arrive at a final position to be agreed upon among interested Washington agencies.

Sincerely yours,

Donald A. Denmead

Honorable Christian Herter
Acting Secretary of State
The Department of State
Washington 25, D. C.

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